

Our Peril on the Eastern Front

Allied Victory in the West Barren Unless
Slav Peoples to the East are Freed from
German Domination and Formed
Into Strong Independent
Barrier States

BY

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the message it carries may reach the largest number of persons

FOREWORD

A few months ago the cause of democracy was in dire and direct peril on the Western Front. German armies were driving victoriously forward. German troops were filled with enthusiasm and the will to win. There was imminent danger that the British and French armies would be separated and crushed in detail, and the Allied cause lost in military defeat before America could make her weight felt.

Today this immediate peril has disappeared. German armies are in retreat. German soldiers are dispirited. American millions are pouring into France, full of fighting enthusiasm. British and French alike have been rejuvenated in spirit. Prospects now are bright for a decisive military victory for the Allied cause.

Nevertheless there remains great danger that Germany will win this war. The Central Powers have gained hundreds of thousands of square miles of territory and power over millions of people by their victories on the Eastern Front. Even before the war they had millions of Slavs under their control. All Russia, as matters now stand, lies open to Teutonic domination and exploitation unless the Allies give effective assistance.

Our greatest peril now lies on the Eastern Front. After decisively defeating Germany in the West the Allies must dictate a peace which will force her to disgorge all she has gained in the East. They must go further and force Austria-Hungary to set free the Slav peoples—Czechoslovaks of Bohemia, Moravia and Slovakia; Jugo-Slavs comprising the Slovenes, Croatians, Dalmatians and Serbs; the Poles and Ruthenes of Galicia, and the Rumanians of Transylvania and part of Bukowina—and consent to their formation into independent barrier states which will forever bar Teutonic expansion to the Eastward.

If the Allies do not do this, Germany will in time consolidate and organize these possessions, prepare to feed herself despite all blockades, form an army twice the size of the one she was able to put into the field in this war, and strike again when she is ready.

America in times past has paid little attention to the situation in Eastern Europe. The time has come when every American should study this complicated question, realize its extreme importance in connection with the future safety of the world, and demand that no peace be made which will leave the Central Powers in a position to prepare for a future and mightier war for world conquest.

Democracies can only fight for causes which are approved by the masses of their people. They cannot be driven into war at the behest of a ruler. Those who make peace for democracies must be guided by the wishes of their peoples. It is the duty of every individual American to know the facts and think clearly and to demand first a crushing military victory on the Western Front and then a peace which shall remove forever the German menace to world safety on the Eastern Front.

[For map, and brief sketches of the nations held in bondage by the Central Powers, see Appendix.]

GERMANY BATTLES TO KEEP LOOT IN EAST

Fifty-five million souls have been reduced to virtual slavery and 494,552 square miles of territory have been overrun by the Germans as a result of the war on the Eastern Front. From the Arctic Ocean to the Black Sea the heavy hand of German domination has been laid upon conquered peoples. A territory more than twice the size of the present German Empire has come under German rule, and the population of the German Empire itself is but a few millions greater than that of the lands which have fallen a prey to the Kaiser's armies or his intriguing diplomats.

Germany can no longer hope for victory on the Western Front. The weight of America's millions at last is beginning to be felt, and the Kaiser's legions are moving backward. But Germany has not lost hope of keeping what she has gained on the Eastern Front. She believes that the attention of the Allies can be distracted by large concessions in the West, and that her diplomats will succeed where her armies have failed, so that she will be able to retain her conquests to the East, organize and develop them with German efficiency, and then, when the time is ripe, strike again with a force which will be irresistible.

The lands which have come under absolute German dominion as a result of the war are:*

	Area in Sq. Miles	Population		Area in Sq. Miles	Population
Finland	144,253	3,000,000	Russian Poland	49,130	11,500,000
Estonia	7,718	500,000	Ukraine	163,249	26,500,000
Livonia	18,160	1,500,000	Rumania	50,720	6,850,000
Courland	10,535	750,000	Serbia	35,000	4,000,000
Kovno	15,687	1,750,000		494,552	55,250,000

In addition the whole of Russia and Siberia will remain open to German exploitation unless the Allied and Czecho-Slovak armies are successful in expelling the troops of the Central Powers.

The area of the German Empire itself before the war was but 208,780 square miles, and its population was about 68,000,000. Austria-Hungary, its ally and practical vassal, has an area of 238,977 square miles and a population of about 53,000,000.

Germany inveigled poor deluded and disorganized Russia into a peace on the basis of no annexations and no indemnities, and then proceeded to take what she wanted on one pretext or another in the guise of setting up separate states whose independence would be but a political fiction. Finland she induced to revolt, and then sent German troops in to help Finland against the Russia with which she was at peace. The result is that Finland now is absolutely dominated by Germany; the

*Figures from 1910 Edition of Encyclopedia Britannica, corrected and estimated to round numbers, taking into account natural increase in population and parts of provinces, where boundaries are indefinite.

Kaiser's troops are in control, and plans are under way to make Finland an "independent" nation with a Hohenzollern prince on the throne.

The Russian provinces of Esthonia, Livonia, Courland and Kovno, lying along the Baltic, Germany proceeded to grab outright, and now proposes to annex directly to the German Empire. This, with German domination of Finland, will make the Baltic practically a German lake.

Poland is to be another "independent" state, if the German plans do not miscarry, with a German or Austrian prince as king. Ukraina, with the exception of Poland, the richest part of Russia, is now nominally a republic, but German troops are in control and already there is talk of making it a kingdom ruled by a German prince. Rumania was forced to make a peace which gave Germany practical control, and since the treaty was signed Germany has been making new and harder conditions all the time and enforcing them at the point of the bayonet. Poor little Serbia, though its shattered armies are still valiantly fighting, is absolutely overrun by the enemy. No doubt the peace terms for it will be harshest of all, unless Germany is beaten on the Western Front.

Pause and consider for a moment what these conquests mean if Germany is allowed to keep and consolidate them. From Finland and the Russian provinces along the Baltic Germany has gained vast wealth in timber and complete freedom from any rival trade. From Poland she has gained a well developed industrial and agricultural region, amply able to add greatly to her ability to make war in the future. From the Ukraine and Rumania, the grainary of Europe, she will have gained cereals which would make her independent of the outside world, and oils and minerals in such vast quantities that practically the whole continental European supply would be in her grasp. From Serbia she has gained the open door to the Orient through her vassal states of Bulgaria and Turkey.

From of all these states Germany will have gained an industrious and virile population which, if organized under the German plan, would furnish an addition of some 8,000,000 men to Germany's armies. The Central Powers, then, if allowed to keep these conquests, would be able, after a few years of rest and recuperation, to put an army of 30,000,000 men in the field, to feed and clothe them without calling upon the outside world, and to so dominate the avenues of communication that the remainder of the world would be at their mercy when they chose to strike again.

Laying aside all humanitarian reasons, that is why America and her allies cannot afford to make a peace until German militarism has been destroyed. Even if we could stand by and see fifty million people enslaved in Eastern Europe, we cannot, nor can any other nation which hopes in future to live in peace and security, dare make a peace which will give an uncrushed Germany an opportunity to organize such a vast territory and population into a military machine beside which the present German armies are dwarfed, and strike again for world conquest when the time is ripe.

II

STRANGLING OF RUSSIA SOUGHT BY GERMANY

Russia, with its millions of square miles of undeveloped territory in Europe and Asia, and its remaining 130,000,000 inhabitants, will be cut off from the open sea and economically strangled by Germany if the Kaiser is allowed to keep the vast territories he has taken possession of by force of arms and intrigue on the Eastern Front.

With Finland and the Baltic provinces in Germany's possession, Russia will be cut off from the Baltic except for the port of Petrograd, and there is no assurance that Germany, if allowed to do so by the Allies, will not find some excuse for taking possession of that city.

Domination by Germany of the Ukraine and the territory seized by it with the aid of German and Austrian troops, will cut Russia off from the Black Sea, and communication with the outside world by water in that direction. Only the Pacific Ocean, separated from the main portion by thousands of miles of railroad, will remain as an export and import outlet free from German domination.

Thus will the whole of Russia, the vastest field for industrial and commercial development left on the globe, be at the mercy of German exploitation. Russia will, to all intents and purposes, have ceased to be a European nation. It will have no communication with Western Europe except through German controlled lands. It will not be able to ship its grain Westward except by permission of Germany. Nor will it be able to import the vast amount of agricultural and industrial machinery it must have except from Germany or through Germany, except over the single-track 8,000-mile long Trans-Siberian Railroad to the Pacific Coast.

Russian history, for ages, has been made by the efforts of this semi-Asiatic people, endeavoring to embrace European civilization, to expand their territories toward warm water. It has been counterbalanced by the German and Austrian "Drang nach Osten" or "pust toward the East," which expresses the imperialistic aims of the Teutonic countries. They have long recognized that their future lay toward the East, where the lands were peopled by a Slavic population and were ripe for exploitation, commercially or through out and out conquest.

With the collapse of Russia as a military power the great barrier to the "Drang nach Osten" is removed. Even in the days before the war, when the Czar and his Cossacks offered something like real opposition to German military encroachment, the German commercial interests had penetrated Russia to such an extent that a large section of the business of the Czar's empire was under German control.

No less successful had been the German secret propaganda. Court circles, headed by the German-born Czarina, were notoriously pro-German. Official circles in the army were affected, and such was the German hold on business interests that the production of war supplies by Russia was, for a long time, almost impossible.

If Germany, because of its proximity and because of its nationally supported spy and commercial systems, was able thus to dominate Russia before the war, think what it will be able to do now unless the Allied nations, by a smashing victory, force it to disgorge the spoils it has taken in the East.

The great export ports of the Baltic, and the ports of the Black Sea will be in German hands if, by any chicanery, Germany can persuade the victorious Allies to allow her to keep possession of them. Constantinople will be ruled by Germany's vassal state, Turkey, unless the Allies force Turkey out of Europe. All Russian goods will thus either have to pass through Germany or land controlled by Germany or take the tremendously expensive Pacific route. The Kaiser's merchants will have first call on everything which Russia will have to sell, and the Kaiser's manufacturers will have everything their own way in supplying the things which Russia will need to buy.

German capital will build Russian factories and railroads, develop Russian mines and forests, and furnish the machinery for Russian agriculture. German merchants will become established all through Russia, and will buy their goods from Germany. German "kultur" will be imposed upon the Russian peasant, and Germany as a whole will grow rich through this monopoly of Russian trade and industry.

It may go even further. Powerful Germany, no doubt, will find additional excuses for actually taking territory away from weak and disorganized Russia. Every time some exasperated Russian explodes a bomb under some German diplomat, the Kaiser will likely enough use it as a pretext for seizing another Russian province.

The Czar's wall of Cossacks has been removed. Nothing will remain, unless German militarism is crushed, to prevent the more or less gradual subjection of 180,000,000 people of non-Teutonic races, and their exploitation for the benefit of the German privileged class. Germany will see to it that there is no Eastern Front the next time she sets out to fight the nations of Western Europe for complete domination of the world.

Russia is a long ways from the United States. Most of the people of America are disappointed with the way Russia collapsed and failed the Allies in the war.

"What concern is it of ours what happens to Russia?" is the question one hears on many sides.

The concern is just this:

A Germany with predatory ideals allowed to despoil Russia will become so powerful that no nation or combination of nations can oppose it when next it is ready to strike.

It will have ample funds for financing its next world war.

It will have such enormous resources that no blockade can interfere with its supply of food and munitions.

Such a Germany is a direct menace to the United States because it sees in this country its greatest rival in world trade; and Germany, gone mad, cannot conceive of commercial rivalry divorced from political and military rivalry. And so when Germany strikes again, it will strike the United States; and one nation or the other must perish.

The United States, in common with its Allies, must see to it now that no peace is made with Germany which will leave it in a position ever to strike again as it did in August, 1914.

Therefore there can be no peace until Germany has been forced to disgorge all it has gained on the Eastern Front, and more.

GERMANY STRIPS RUSSIA OF NECESSARY RESOURCES

It is not just square miles of territory that Germany takes when she wins a war. Germany is very careful, when she takes territory, to take just that part which will most cripple her neighbors, and make them least able in future to resist her aggression in a commercial and military way.

Thus in 1870, when Germany had France at her mercy, she took Alsace-Lorraine. These provinces contained what was then thought to be all the iron ore deposits in France. Since then other deposits have been discovered and developed in the Briey basin, and now Germany is seeking to take that region. Likewise all the coal and iron of Belgium and the coal of Northern France now are in German hands.

So it is with Russia. German leaders realize that the whole of Russia cannot be taken over right now. Russia is too vast to be swallowed and digested all at once. So Germany plans to take now those portions of Russia which are richest in natural resources and industrial development. Thus the remainder of the vast country will be reduced to impotence, and made dependent entirely upon Germany for the things which make for individual progress in modern times.

In carrying out this policy the seizure of Poland and the Ukraine are Germany's trump cards right now. Poland, before it was devastated by the Germans, was the chief industrial region of Russia, and the Ukraine and portions of the Caucasus which the Germans are trying to control, contain the greatest part of Russia's developed natural wealth—coal, iron, copper and oils—and in addition its chief agricultural resources, which four years of short rations have taught Germany to consider as important as coal and iron.

The case of Poland is one which particularly merits the attention of the United States and the Allied nations. Poland was a great nation when the states now composing the German Empire were weak principalities with no sense of national unity. Despite more than a century of oppression the Poles still retain their language, their customs and their sense of national unity. They are capable of being converted into a strong and virile and independent nation, if Germany's strangle hold can be broken, and an independent Poland will do much to block a predatory Germany's military and commercial progress toward the East.

Poland, it will be remembered, at the end of the Napoleonic wars, was partitioned among Prussia, Russia, and Austria. Russia oppressed the Poles, sometimes brutally, but made no effort to cause them to cease being Poles. Austria in the Polish province of Galicia, adopted a more

liberal attitude, allowing the Polish language and customs to be used, and there was comparatively little friction. But Prussia set out upon a deliberate policy to cause the Polish language to be forgotten, to drive Poles from the higher offices and finally to oust them from ownership of land and to Germanize that part of Poland which fell to her share, so completely that the very name of Poland would be forgotten.

Prussia, despite a century of persecution, failed. But it learned a new lesson. It learned that a Pole ceased to be a Pole only when he was dead. Therefore when Germany overran Russian Poland, it saw to it that there were as many dead Poles as possible.

Through starvation and through deliberate wholesale murder Germany set out to depopulate Poland, and lay all this region open to German immigration and colonization. We have ample testimony to the effect that hundreds of thousands of Poles met death by actual starvation. The factories in the industrial centers were closed, and Polish workmen were forced to go into Germany to work to keep from starving. Germany would not even let Polish mills grind Polish grain, but forced the Poles to ship their grain to Germany to be milled, and then whatever flour Germany did not seize, was shipped back to the people who grew the grain.

It is plain that Germany, if allowed to keep possession of all Poland, plans so to destroy the nation that there will no longer be a compact Polish people with national aspirations able to oppose it. Poland is to be colonized from Germany and its industrial resources allowed to reopen only when they have been thoroughly Germanized.

The United States, aside from the threat to its future safety if a predatory Germany is allowed to extend its empire, will see a great nation—one which has fought for freedom as valiantly as America itself did—practically wiped off the face of the earth unless the Kaiser's hold on Poland is broken.

Ukrainia furnishes the greater part of the iron and coal for all European Russia. It furnishes most of Russia's vast wheat exports—more than enough to make Germany independent of the rest of the world. It furnishes the greater part of Russian sugar, of Russian oil and Russian copper. If Germany is allowed to take possession of all these, Russia would be placed in a position where she never again could assert her rights against Germany. The German Empire would be practically doubled in population, more than doubled in area, and would have a monopoly on the iron with which to make shells and on the oils so indispensable for modern war. Italy is without metals. France will be if Germany can keep only a little French territory and Belgium. Russia will be practically so, if Germany keeps what it has

in its clutches right now. Nowhere in Continental Europe will there be a nation with fuel and iron to wage a war of self defense, and in times of peace they will all be at the commercial mercy of a soulless Germany.

The result will be that only England and the United States will remain of the great nations with fuel and iron at their disposal. Germany will have 140,000,000 people to draw upon for soldiers instead of 70,000,000. Another hundred million will be available to Germany through Turkey and the enlarged Austria and Bulgaria, which are even now Germany's vassals.

No nation will be in a position to resist the mighty forces that a predatory Germany would be able to throw into the field for the next war—perhaps twenty years hence. No other Continental nation would be able to furnish the raw material for its own guns and shells. Germany, if the Allies do not prevent it by force, would simply consolidate its present conquests, organize and train their manhood, and, when it is ready, set out to conquer all Europe and Asia, and perhaps even America.

The United States cannot afford to let predatory and soulless Germany remain in this commanding position. Leaving aside all motives of humanity and regard for the rights of other peoples, it must, if it itself hopes to continue to exist as a free republic, continue this war until this German power for aggression is shattered completely for all time.

IV

MUST FREE OPPRESSED PEOPLES OF AUSTRIA

Austria-Hungary must be dismembered before the United States and its Allies can make a lasting peace with Germany.

This may seem a startling assertion, in view of the fact that this country did not declare war on Austria-Hungary until months after it was drawn into the conflict with Germany, and that now, as always, Germany is recognized as our chief enemy. One might ask, "Why not dismember Germany?", and many probably will so ask unless they stop to think what the objects of this war really are.

In the first place this is a war of democracy against autocracy.

The cardinal principle of democracy is that the people of any given nationality shall have the right to choose their own form of government.

Austria-Hungary is not a nation in the true sense of the word. It is a conglomeration of peoples of several races and tongues ruled against their will by two dominant races—the Germans and Magyars—under a historically corrupt and incompetent dynasty.

These subject peoples, mostly Slavic in blood, constitute a clear majority of the population of Austria and almost half that of Hungary, yet they have no voice in choosing their form of government. If they dared raise their voices some would choose union with Italy, some with a greater Serbia or Poland, some union with Rumania and some absolute independence, according to their race and geographical location.

The same cannot be said of Germany. Barring rather restricted areas peopled by unwilling subjects, such as the Poles to the East and the inhabitants of Alsace-Lorraine on the West, which must be lopped off when the peace treaty is written, the German Empire consists of a homogeneous people of the same race and national aspirations. While it may be necessary to assist in a change in the form of government which will enable this people to get rid of the Hohenzollern and the military aristocracy, any enforced division of the German Empire itself which would place portions of its inhabitants under foreign domination would be doing the very thing which the United States and her allies are fighting against—it would be denying a people the right to choose for themselves the state of which they shall form a part.

That is why we hear no agitation for the dismemberment of Germany—our arch enemy—while the conviction grows more and more that Austria-Hungary, that unfortunate monarchy, must be disrupted at the conference table at which the peace treaty is written, if it does not fall apart itself before that time.

"How, then, is the dismemberment of Austria-Hungary necessarily

involved in any consideration of the ambitions of the predatory Germany that brought on this war?" one may inquire.

It already has been shown how Germany must be forced to restore all that she has taken from Russia either to Russia or to allow the peoples of these territories to form their own independent governments. It has been demonstrated that Poland, when erected into a free state, with no hint of domination, will be a powerful barrier to German military and political expansion to the Eastward.

The setting free of the oppressed peoples of Austria-Hungary, and the giving to them permission to unite with nations already in existence with which they have national sympathies, or to form their own independent governments, as the case may be, will complete that barrier and forever bar Germany from forcible expansion to the Southeast.

A free Bohemia will take its place beside a free Poland as a buffer between Germany and disorganized Russia. A restored and strengthened Rumania, with the millions of Rumanians added to those now nominally independent, will extend the barrier to the Black Sea, provided Ukrainia is freed from German domination. A Greater Serbia, with the millions of Jugo-Slavs in the southern parts of Austria and Hungary incorporated in it, will be an effectual block to Germany's military oneness with Bulgaria and Turkey.

Thus, and only thus will the German dream of a Mittel-Europa extending from the Baltic to the Persian Gulf, and opening the way for further conquests in India and the Orient, to be followed by a world domination, be brought to an end. Only thus will the German people be shown that their rulers who have promised them the spoils of a conquered world, have misled them, and that their future lies not in military and political expansion but in thrift and industry and legitimate commerce which other nations of the world can respect.

Austria-Hungary, as now constituted, and Bulgaria and Turkey have been reduced to a state of vassalage by Germany as completely as though they had been conquered by force of arms. Austria-Hungary could not make a separate peace if she wanted to as long as Germany remains unbeaten on the Western Front. If she could do so and preserve her rule over the peoples she now oppresses, she probably would be glad to do so. But the time for that has gone by. She would be overrun by Germany in a week if she tried it, and the Allied nations have already recognized the fact that any peace, to be lasting, must remove the causes of friction. The chief cause of friction in Southeastern Europe now is, and has been for centuries, the struggles of oppressed peoples to escape from their oppressors. There must be no

more oppressors, or, in time, the war will have to be fought all over again.

President Wilson has declared unequivocally for the right of self-determination of peoples as one of the conditions of peace. The Allied Council of Versailles in June, 1918, pronounced in favor of giving the oppressed peoples of Slavic blood held in bondage by Austria their liberties.

Both the President and the Allied diplomats at Versailles realized that this war, on which so much blood and treasure has been spent, when it is settled must be settled on the basis of right. They see, and every American should see, that, if it is not thus settled, the struggle will have to be faced once more, after Germany and her allies have had time to recuperate, and that when Germany, if allowed to keep its Eastern conquests and complete the organization of her vassal states, is ready to strike again she will strike in a way that the world cannot successfully resist.

V

MILLIONS IN AUSTRIA HELD IN BONDAGE

Considerably more than half of all the people in Austria-Hungary are held in bondage—in practical servitude against their will—by the two dominant races, the Germans of Austria and the Magyars of Hungary.

These bond-people of Austria-Hungary represent eleven national groups, and though they form a clear majority of the population, have so little voice in the affairs of the empire that they might as well be said to have none at all. All are clamoring for their freedom, and all would fight for it were they given a chance. But few remain at home now except the decrepit old men, the women and the children. Their able-bodied men are drafted into the army and forced to fight against their will. Thousands are deserting, but so complete is the discipline that the majority of them must remain, sandwiched in between Hungarians and Germans, until the ramshackle empire falls to pieces or is dismembered at the peace council table.

In 1910, the time of taking the last census before the war, there were in Austria proper 9,950,266 Germans belonging to the dominant race of the Austrian half of the dual monarchy and 10,050,575 Magyars formed the dominant race in Hungary. They ruled over the following subject peoples:*

	In Austria	In Hungary
Czecho-Slovaks	6,435,983	1,967,970
Poles	4,967,984
Little Russians	3,518,854	472,587
Slovenians	1,252,940
Serbo-Croatians	783,344	2,939,638
Italians	768,422
Rumanians	275,115	2,949,027

In Austria the German population, numbering only 35.58 per cent, has a clear majority in parliament, and treats the Slavs and Latins as inferior peoples. In Hungary the Magyar population outnumbers the Slavs only slightly, but gives them few political rights.

It will be remembered that little over half a century ago the Magyars themselves were engaged in a terrific struggle for liberty, and were only subdued by Austria through the assistance of the then Czar of Russia. The dual monarchy was then formed, and the Magyars were placated by the granting to them rule over portions of the various Slav races. From a people battling for freedom they have since been transformed into a people who apparently enjoy the oppression of others as

*Statistics from the Statesman's Year Book, 1917, census of 1910. These are official statistics, which favor the ruling nations. For instance, nearly all the 1,300,000 Jews in Austria are classed as Germans, while in Hungary not only the Jews, numbering 960,000, but almost everyone else able to speak the Magyar language, are classed as Magyars.

much as the Germans themselves.

Most of the Slavs in the dual monarchy came under the Hapsburg rule originally, because of the invasion of Europe by the Turks. The Holy Roman Empire, of which Austria is the decrepit descendant, was the bulwark of Europe against Mohammedanism in those days.

Bohemia, threatened with Mohammedan conquest, allowed herself to fall into the power of the Hapsburgs. Hungary was "rescued" from the Turk. As the years and centuries went on other territories were "freed," the last ones to be thus liberated being Bosnia and Herzegovina, which were only formally incorporated into the Austrian empire in 1909. The inhabitants of these two provinces are almost purely Serbian in blood and language, and the seizing of them by Austria would in all likelihood have provoked a world war at that time had it not been for the fact that Russia, the protector of the little Slav nationalities, was so weakened by the Japanese war and torn by revolutionary movements that it dared not to take up arms.

Bohemia, with the neighboring provinces of Moravia and Slovakia forming the most compact and numerous group of Slavs in the empire, familiarly known as Czecho-Slovaks, was, before the war, the best educated, the most prosperous and the most highly developed part of Austria-Hungary, in spite of the fact that the Bohemians were under the domination of the Germans of the empire. They clung tenaciously, however, to their desire for freedom, and when the war broke out Bohemia was soon a seething mass of suppressed revolt.

Five years ago it might have been possible to placate the Slav races of Austria-Hungary by giving them equal rights with their German and Magyar oppressors. Now it would be impossible. The avenue of expansion for Germany to the Southeast must be closed forever. The just national aspirations of oppressed peoples must be satisfied, or the Balkan problem will remain after this war just what it was before, a continual menace to the peace of the world.

It was this Balkan unrest which brought about the Sarajevo murders and which gave the pretext for this war. All the Central Powers were looking for was a pretext. They will continue to look for pretexts in the future unless their military power is shattered completely and the idea that they can enforce their will on subject races is removed forever.

Already the experience of the Central Powers in subjecting other nations, a bit at a time, has been such that they now think they can treat the whole world that way. For half a century they have been getting ready for this course of action. Now they have definitely embarked on it. They have in their grasp conquered territory and subject populations of sufficient magnitude to assure them of practical success if they are allowed to keep what they have gained.

They must give up all they have won and more or no spot on the earth will be safe from their aggression in the future.

VI

AUSTRIAN SLAVS DIE BY THOUSANDS FOR ALLIES

"If the Austrian Slavs want their freedom so badly, why don't they fight for it? Why should we be fighting for their freedom?"

The answer to the first question is that the Austrian Slavs, thousands and tens of thousands of them, ARE fighting for their freedom, and fighting more heroically, if possible, than the people of any other nation. They are fighting with the French on the West Front, and with the Italians; they are fighting with the Serbs in the Balkans, and they are fighting alone, surrounded by hostile millions, in Russia.

Wherever the Slav from Austria fights, he fights under conditions more appalling than those of any other soldier. Like other Allies, he takes the chance of death as he goes into battle, but he takes more. If his army is forced to retreat, the wounded Austrian Slav knows that death is his portion if he falls into the hands of the enemy. He will be executed as a traitor, because, originally he came from Austria. Other wounded may, or may not, be given medical attention and allowed to eke out a miserable existence in a prison camp, but the fate of the captured Austrian Slav, be he wounded or unwounded, is death.

At the outbreak of the war, in 1914, it was plain that the Slavs in the Austrian armies would not willingly fight against the Entente Allies. The Germans knew it and the Magyars knew it. They controlled the government, and they at once took steps to see to it that the soldiers from Bohemia, Moravia, Croatia, Slavonia, and Bosnia, who numbered hundreds of thousands, were so intermixed with German and Magyar regiments that they always formed a helpless minority.

All the disagreeable tasks—the dirty work—of the army were given to these Slav troops. They were constantly watched, and constantly abused. They were put into the firing line where artillery fire was hottest, and deliberately used as cannon fodder. When they went "over the top" in a charge they went in small bodies, sandwiched in between Germans and Magyars, instead of in whole divisions and army corps.

But all of these precautions could not prevent the Slav soldiers from carrying out their purpose to desert to the Entente Allies wherever possible. Individuals, small groups, and even, on occasion, whole regiments passed over to the Serbs and the Russians, not to seek security in internment camps, but to turn and fight their Austrian oppressors. More than once Czech regiments revolted, and were shot down in cold blood by German and Magyar troops. Hundreds were mown down in pitched battles by machine gun fire, and others were executed by firing squads.

Nevertheless, at the time Austria was making its first big invasion of Serbia, enough Slav soldiers deserted to contribute very greatly to the Austrian debacle and disastrous retreat. The same was true on the Russian front when the Russians were making their great drives through Galicia. It was plain that the Austrian troops could not stand before the Russians because so many of the Austria-Hungarian soldiers were of Slav blood, and would not fight their friends.

So numerous were these desertions to the Russians that it was estimated, at the time of the ignominious peace that Germany forced on Russia, that there were from 60,000 to 100,000 of them in the Russian army. The Bolshevik government first agreed to permit these forces, now generally spoken of as Czecho-Slovaks, to keep their arms, and to transport them to Vladivostock, on the Pacific Ocean, some 9,000 miles from the fighting front, that they might embark for a journey around the world to appear as foes of Germany on the Western Front. Great Britain made plans to furnish the ships.

But Germany interfered. It caused the Bolshevik government to rescind this order of safe conduct, and to interpose armed resistance to the efforts of the Czecho-Slovaks to reach the Pacific. It went further and induced the Bolshevik government to arm German and Austrian prisoners in Siberia to assist the disorganized Russian forces which were unable to stay the eastward march of the Czecho-Slovak armies.

That is how the Czecho-Slovak forces which we hear so much of today came to be in Siberia. Nothing in all history approaches the heroism of these little bands. Surrounded by enemies in overwhelming numbers they continued to fight their way eastward. City after city in Siberia fell into their hands. They fought the Russians and they fought the German and Austrian veterans whom the Russians armed. They won battles against overwhelming forces, and they are still holding out, though thousands of miles from home and ringed by enemies. Their sole desire was to get back to the battle front, even by a journey around the world, that they may fight with the Allies and help to liberate their helpless relatives at home.

These are the heroes that the Italian, French and English governments have recognized as the army of an independent and allied nation and that the United States and Japan are now moving to aid in Siberia. We cannot permit the Russians to hand tens of thousands of them over to the Central Powers for certain execution, any more than we can permit the Central Powers permanently to control Russia and Siberia.

Thousands of these Czecho-Slovaks have died fighting for the Allied cause. Thousands of others have died the death of traitors because they would not fight the Allies. Thousands more, held down by the

severest terrorism the world has ever known, are only waiting for an opportunity to desert and join the Allied armies.

They have proved, beyond all question, their willingness to fight for their own freedom at every opportunity. After such heroic proof would it not be the basest ingratitude for the Allied nations to make a peace which did not free from bondage the Bohemians, the Slovaks, the Croats, the Serbs, and all other groups which are held against their will in Austria-Hungary?

Our President has said that we are fighting to make the world safe for Democracy. There can be no democracy in Southeastern Europe as long as millions of Slavs are held in bondage, and there can be no lasting peace until these loyal friends of the Allied cause are erected into strong independent nations and the German plan of expansion to the eastward is definitely blocked.

APPENDIX

The Slav Peoples, Who They Are, Where They Live, and Their Historic Claims to Independent Existence

THE CZECHO-SLOVAKS

The word, "Czecho-Slovak," is a comparatively new one, brought into general use since the Russian revolution. It has been called to the attention of a wondering world by that little band of fighters who, since the East Front crumbled away in the great Russian collapse, have been the principal barrier to German penetration of the vast interior of that once mighty empire.

Czech and Slovak are different forms of the same ancient Slav word. The Czechs and the Slovaks are the same people in blood and in language, but have been struggling along for centuries under different oppressors. The Czechs inhabiting Bohemia and Moravia have been under Austrian rule for some four hundred years, and those in Silesia have long been subject to Germany. The Slovaks, on the contrary, are the inhabitants of the province of Slovakia, which has been long under Magyar domination in Hungary, and of a portion of the province of Galicia, which is likewise inhabited by Poles and Ruthenes.

The Czechs number some six and a half millions, and the Slovaks something like two and a half millions. They composed the Slav tribes which, centuries ago, penetrated furthest into middle Europe. It was they who most strenuously resisted pressure from the East when the Huns—those amateurs whom Attila led—invaded Europe, and from the West when the Germans, who in this Twentieth Century of Christianity have given a new meaning to the word "Hun," first began to exercise the "Drang nach Osten" which today has set the world aflame. The result is that they were cut off from their Slav brothers to the South by the German wedge and the Hungarian wedge which came together on the border between Austria and Hungary.

The Czecho-Slovaks remain a Slavic wedge extending far into the heart of Teutonic Mittel-Europa. Their sons are fighting in the armies of all the Allied nations, while the Czecho-Slovak army in Russia and Siberia has conducted itself with so much bravery and diplomatic wisdom as well that it has been recognized as a belligerent by Britain, France, Italy and finally by the United States.

Away back in the middle of the Fourteenth century Prague, the capital of Bohemia, became the seat of one of the earliest of the great universities of Middle Europe. Bohemia was famous for the learning and prosperity of its people, students going there from all Europe to absorb the culture that had ebbed so low elsewhere because of the feudal wars and the instability of governments. A good illustration of the commanding position Bohemia had obtained in educational matters is the fact that in 1638 Johann Amos Comenius, noted Bohemian religious leader and secular educator, was called by the government of Sweden to set up a scheme for the management of the schools of that country, and a few years later was invited to join a commission that the English parliament then intended to appoint to reform the system of education in England.

For two centuries Bohemia maintained its lead in the intellectual awakening which was overspreading Europe.

In 1526 the Czechs and the Austrians, both menaced by the Turks,

entered into an alliance on terms of equality, with the Hapsburgs as joint rulers; but almost immediately the Hapsburgs began to treat Bohemia as a subject province. In 1618 the Czechs rose in revolt and were crushed in a disastrous defeat in 1620. The Austrian Germans uprooted the Czech aristocracy and filled their places with foreign adventurers. and the Czech nation, as a nation, practically ceased to exist.

Little was heard of the Czech nation for more than two hundred years. Its very memory almost was lost. But, in the middle of the Nineteenth Century there was a renaissance of national feeling. In spite of all persecutions and repressive measures the sterling Czech character again asserted itself, and Bohemia, as of old, once more became a seat of learning. The percentage of illiteracy in Bohemia is lower than anywhere else in Austria-Hungary, and even lower than in Germany itself. Industrially Bohemia became the most developed and prosperous part of Austria-Hungary, and remained so until the outbreak of the world war.

In spite of many provocations Bohemia remained essentially loyal to the Hapsburgs during the latter half of the Nineteenth century. It began to clamor for its rights, but would have been satisfied with equality within the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

For twenty years or more, however, there has been a growing feeling among the Czechs and Slovaks that they could never hope for justice from their German and Hungarian oppressors, who, with the greatest severity, tried to crush out all revival of national feeling. More and more they were convinced that only absolute independence would ever bring them the justice to which they were entitled.

Thus it was that the opening of the world war found the Czecho-Slovaks ripe for revolt. They were, of course, drafted into the Austro-Hungarian armies, like all other peoples within the dual monarchy, but they would not willingly fight their Slav brothers in Russia and Serbia. They seized every opportunity to surrender, but not from cowardice, for they immediately enlisted in the armies of the foes of the Central Powers. Even when Russia collapsed the Czecho-Slovaks continued to fight with great bravery—a bravery which has at last won them recognition from the Allied powers—a recognition which virtually amounts to a declaration that the terms of peace which the nations of the Entente Alliance will impose will insist on the creation of an independent Czecho-Slovakia.

The United States was the last of the great powers among the Entente Allies to grant this recognition, having acted on September 3, 1918. Its recognition of the Czecho-Slovak State, however, went further than that of any of the other powers in that it recognized the Czecho-Slovak National Council as the de facto government of this new state, and accorded to Thomas G. Masaryk, president of this council, who is making his headquarters in Washington, the right to represent the Czecho-Slovaks in a diplomatic way with the American government.

The moral qualities and political sagacity of the Bohemians are testified to by the fact that in 1871 the Bohemian Diet, alone among the representative deliberative bodies of the world, had the wisdom and courage to protest against the seizure of Alsace-Lorraine by Prussia.

THE JUGO-SLAVS

“Jugo” is the Slav word for “South.” The Jugo-Slavs are the Slavs who were cut off from their more northerly brothers by the Huns and

the Germans. They, at one time, inhabited practically all the Balkans and that portion of Southern Hungary and Austria around the Adriatic Sea, extending clear to the Alps at what is now the Italian frontier.

It was these Southern Slavs who felt the full force of the Turkish invasion of Europe. For centuries those who resided in Bulgaria and Serbia languished under Turkish rule. In the Fourteenth and Fifteenth centuries there were what almost amounted to national migrations into the lands of Austria and Hungary. The migrating Slavs were welcomed by the Hapsburgs, and were promised lands and an autonomous government time and again. They were permitted to form the border guard against the Turks and to do most of the hard fighting, but they never reaped their reward. They were used, time and again by the Hapsburgs, as pawns in their various controversies with the Magyars, and time after time, after they had loyally helped to keep the Magyars in subjection, they were handed over to the latter for persecution in a settlement to appease Magyar anger.

In the Nineteenth Century, after the Serbs in Serbia had obtained their freedom from Turkey, their blood brothers under the Austro-Hungarian yoke began to look to them for the freedom which they had never been able to obtain from the Hapsburgs. This resulted in more and more persecution from the Magyars of Hungary and the Germans of Austria until, at the time of the outbreak of the war, the Jugo-Slavs, likewise, were ripe for revolt, and, like the Czecho-Slovaks farther north, refused, wherever possible, to fight in the Austrian armies.

At present the Jugo-Slavs—some 12,000,000 in number—inhabit the Austrian provinces of Goritzia, along the Italian border, the neighboring provinces of Carniola and Istria and part of Styria; Croatia and Slavonia in Hungary, Dalmatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as Serbia proper and Montenegro. Along the Adriatic Sea there is a little fringe of Italian population, especially in Trieste and a few other cities, but the great mass of population is Slavic.

All of this territory, united under one Slav government—a greater Serbian kingdom of republic, as the case may be—would form a state of sufficient size and population to check effectually the German dream of a German Mittel-Europa extending to the Bosphorus.

Just how far the plans for uniting all the Jugo-Slavs under one government have gone among themselves is shown by the fact that on July 20, 1917, there was issued from the Island of Corfu, where the Serbian government had taken up its seat, what is known as "The Declaration of Corfu."

This provided for an establishment of "The Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes" as a constitutional, democratic parliamentary monarchy with the Karageorgevitch dynasty at its head. It made definite provision for equality of the different religions and of the flags and coats of arms of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, and provided that "the territory of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes will comprise all the territory where our nation lives in compact masses without discontinuity, and where it could not be mutilated without injuring the vital interests of the community."

This leaves room for compromise along the borders where the populations are intermixed with Italians or people of other nationalities.

The declaration was signed by Nikola Pashitch, president of the council and minister of foreign affairs of the Kingdom of Serbia, and Dr. Anto Trumbic, president of the Jugo-Slav committee.

Professor Hinko Hinkovic, former member of the Croatian parliament, and delegate to the Hungarian parliament, now an exile from his native land, is in the United States representing the Jugo-Slavs of Austria-Hungary. He is strongly in favor of a union of all the Jugo-Slavs under one government.

THE RUMANIANS

Rumania took its name, its language and its culture from Ancient Rome, and its people are partly Latin in blood. In ancient times their country formed the outpost of the Roman Empire toward the East. Rumania, like the other Balkan countries, was long under the domination of the Turk. It was liberated part at a time with the result that some 3,000,000 Rumanians who were delivered from the Moslems before the remainder of their brethren, found themselves subject to the domination of the Hapsburgs and residing in the province of Transylvania and part of Bukowina.

It was to liberate these Rumanians from the Magyar yoke that Rumania entered the war. The fatal peace, which Rumania was forced to make, following the collapse of Russia, is well known. Nominally free, Rumania itself is now under Teutonic domination; and the hope of the Rumanians of Hungary of joining their brethren rests solely upon an Allied victory in the West which shall force Austria-Hungary to give up these provinces to a really independent Rumania which will then be large and strong enough to keep the Teutons away from the Black Sea and to bar for them the route to the Orient.

THE CASE OF POLAND

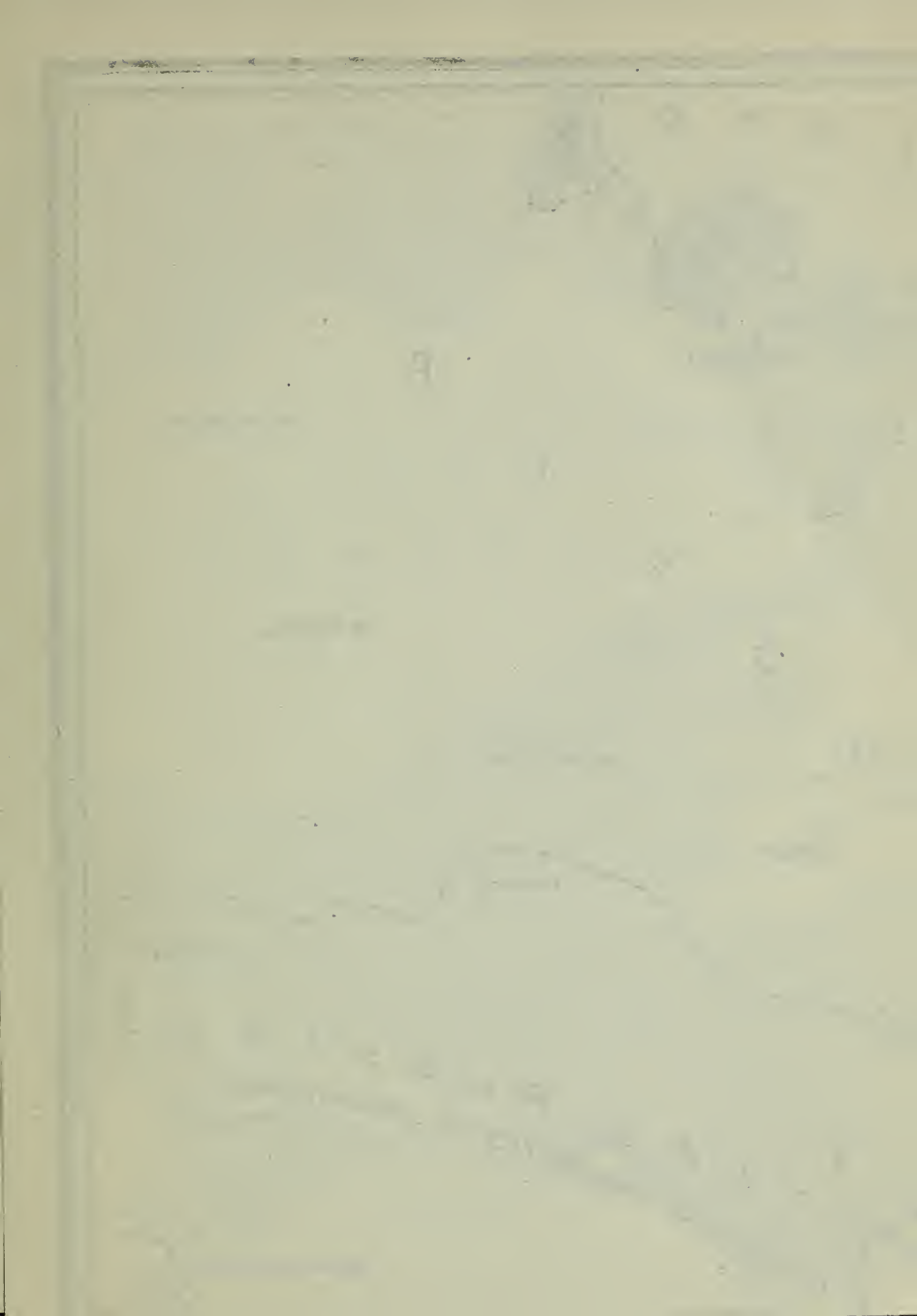
The wrongs of Poland are too well known to need extended treatment here. It will be remembered how Poland was dismembered, three times, by Prussia, Russia and Austria. In each case the dismemberment was purely land grabbing. The Poles once formed one of the most powerful nations of Europe. They were invaded on three sides by strong neighbors, and their lands and their independence taken away without any excuse whatever.

In territory the largest part fell to the share of Russia. Prussia, however, followed out its policy of taking the most valuable part for strategic reasons, and seized the Baltic coast line. To Austria went what is now the Polish part of Galicia.

The Poles long dreamed of and occasionally fought for the reconstruction of their independent nation, but at last it began to seem that this could never be achieved, and the Austrian Poles, at least, had become almost reconciled to continued existence under a foreign yoke.

The world war, however, threw the whole of Russian Poland under German domination. Austria, likewise, is completely dominated by Germany. The sufferings of Poland under the German invasion made the whole world stand aghast. It is now seen that the German policy is deliberately to depopulate Poland, so that it will not have the trouble trying to Germanize it that it did with the portions of Poland that originally fell to Prussia's share.

With all Poland in Germany's grasp, directly or indirectly, and Allied victory certain on the West Front, nothing short of the creation of a completely independent Poland, strong enough to form an effectual barrier against Germany's expansion toward the East, should satisfy the Allied nations.



NATIONALITY MAP of the SLAV BORDER

Showing

POLES

CZECHO-SLOVAKS

RUMANIANS

JUGO-SLAVS

Present Austro-Hungarian

Boundary

Other Present National

Boundaries

Proposed Approximate

National Boundaries



Clarence L. Speed has for many years been engaged in newspaper work in Chicago. He long served as city editor of the *Chicago Record-Herald*, and as financial editor, city editor and editorial writer of the *Chicago Evening Post*. The nature of his work made necessary on his part a careful study of the Great War from the day of its inception.

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